

Referee Escorted From Pitch By Police

LAST MINUTE PENALTY ROBS THE WANDERERS

Bedford Tie To Be Replayed On Monday

By "CHILTERN"

Bedford Town 3, Wycombe Wanderers 3
(after extra-time)

WE WUS ROBBED! No team ever had more justification to wail these well used words of despair than Wycombe Wanderers had on Wednesday night. For there were just two minutes of extra-time to go in this F.A. Cup first round replay when Bedford were awarded the most doubtful of penalties, from which they equalised.

With Wycombe winning 3-2, Bedford were throwing everything into a last desperate attack. The ball was lobbed into the penalty area and bounced high, striking Ian Rundle's chest. Referee Malcolm Sinclair pointed to the penalty spot and was besieged by protesting Wycombe players.

When David Sturrock shot the ball past John Maskell from the spot there followed fantastic

scenes as hundreds of fans charged across the pitch, some joyful, some protesting violently.

Moments later Mr. Sinclair blew the final whistle and had to be escorted off the field by police and officials.

Along with eight other reporters I saw the incident clearly. I maintain that Rundle never touched that ball! It will be the most talked about decision for years.

Until then Wycombe had covered themselves in glory against the Southern League's most glamorous cup fighters.

Until then it was the loveliest night of the year for the hundreds of Wanderers' fans who had travelled to Bedford.

FOUGHT BACK

Wycombe had fought from being a goal down in the first-half and had taken the lead twice. It looked as if they had won the right to a lucrative second-round tie at Oxford United.

And how Wanderers deserved that right. After being given a bit of a run-around in the first-half, in which Sturrock scored with a speculative cross into the goalmouth which Maskell misjudged, they fought back magnificently for Paul Bates to equalise from a free-kick after his first attempt had been blocked.

Ten minutes from the end of ordinary time John Beck floated a precise centre across, and Tony Horseman outjumped his worriers to head a great goal.

But a minute later full-back Skinn ran in for a corner and headed the ball just inside a post.

What a thriller it turned into. Wycombe became more tenacious, and Merrick, who had one of his best games for Wycombe, shot just over the bar. And just on time Sturrock shot wide for Bedford when well-placed.

After six minutes of extra-time Len Worley broke away on the right and slipped the ball to Merrick who coolly rounded Collier before scoring.

Like a pendulum, the game swung from end to end. Benning hit the bar for Bedford, and Maskell made a grand save to Sturrock.

Then, with Wycombe looking home and dry, came the penalty incident. So after 210 minutes of football there's still nothing between these two sides. On Monday they will fight it out again at Loakes Park — after Wycombe won a toss-up for choice of ground.

Wycombe: Maskell; Beck, Royston; Baker, Rundle, Gale; Worley, Samuels, Bates, Horseman, Merrick.